



NEWSLETTER

Canadian Churches of Christ Historical Society
Vol. 4, No. 1-2, Summer-Fall, 2008

MAKING HISTORY

With every tick of the clock the future becomes the past. The present is balanced precariously on the knife-edge thinness of the now and is primarily occupied with the near future and the recent past. This leaves the past as the persisting reality!

Most of the happenings in most of our lives are quite mundane. Education, career, marriage, family, wealth, and health are generally determined by seemingly inconsequential choices made in the unsuspecting moment. Only the historic perspective will reveal the significance of those fateful steps.

From the retrospective view of history, the full implications of our earlier choices become clear. Our innocent choices alter our direction by minute degrees. But given time, the direction our lives take becomes hugely important in terms of their shape, character and success. The historic perspective alerts us to the importance of taking the simple choices of today seriously! In fact, each of us, steadily, and importantly, is making history!

Our individual life experiences become potent when shared in the larger setting of community. The study of the collective history of any group can yield valuable returns for those who will carefully study, thoughtfully assess, and wisely apply the lessons of their history.

Churches of Christ have never been a major force in Canada. However, this religious movement is 50 years older than the Confederation that we know as Canada. As one of the many social and religious phenomena of our country, it deserves the attention of careful study. Even more, the unique stance that this religious group has maintained qualifies it for widespread interest. The multiple reasons for the historical study of Churches of Christ in Canada called forth the CCCHS in 1999. We will shortly

enter into our tenth year of service. Much has been accomplished. Much remains to be done.

May all who read this Newsletter be encouraged to know that progress is being made. As well, may each reader be encouraged to participate in some individual way in promoting the society's objectives: (1) To gather and preserve historical materials pertaining to the "Restoration

2009 ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, August 15, 2009

To be held on the campus of
**GREAT LAKES CHRISTIAN
HIGH SCHOOL**
4875 King Street
Beamsville, ON

Featuring:

**"Early Efforts in Christian
Education in Canada"**

Speakers and Papers
To be announced

Movement" in Canada in one central location; (2) To organize this collection for ease of use; (3) To encourage and promote the historical study of Restorationist churches in Canada.

IN THIS ISSUE

The clock is ticking! In just a few days, fall will be over and winter will officially arrive. The challenge is to complete and forward this letter while it is still "Summer-Fall."

Being concerned with history, it is appropriate that the letter comes out at the end of the reporting period rather than the beginning!

Items to report include the August annual meeting, the winner of the 2008 "Historian of the Year" award, the November meeting of the board of directors, web-site improvements, the announcement of the 2009 annual meeting, and a list of the society's printed publications and recorded CDs/tapes.

In addition, information is given regarding a major project that is being launched, CCCHS members honoured, "A Final Word on Wiers," and "A Good Idea!"

THE MEETING IN NEWMARKET

The ninth annual meeting of the Canadian Churches of Christ Historical Society was conducted at the Newmarket Church of Christ on Saturday, August 16, 2008. A sizeable turnout was benefitted by the presence of a number of descendents of Charles Petch who came to hear Shelley Jacobs' paper on "The Life of Charles W. Petch."

Having attended one term at Carman Bible School and two terms at Nashville Bible School, Petch began preaching in Ontario in the beginning years of the 20th century at such locations as Selkirk, St. Catharines, Fenwick, Stouffville, and Pine Orchard. Following earlier mission trips into western Canada, Petch went west in 1927 to spend the next five years, preaching in Winnipeg, on the Peguis Indian Reserve, at Horse Creek in Saskatchewan, and at mission points in that province. In 1931 he assisted in launching the Minton Bible School, an effort that led to the founding of Radville/Western Christian College. In 1932 he returned to Ontario, preached at Fenwick, and then to northern Ontario where he worked with a small church at Charlton Station. Petch died prematurely in 1938, in a farm accident. Shelley Jacobs' warm paper placed Petch's ministry in the context of the times in which he lived with special attention to early developments in western Canada. Shelley's paper is available in print form and in audio (CD or tape).

Edwin Broadus presented his paper on "The Influence of the Christian Connection on the Restoration Movement in Ontario." This

topic was particularly pertinent to the annual meeting as the Christian Connection's first presence in Canada was at Newmarket, in 1821.

The history of the "Christian Connection" is significant overall as many of those of this American movement, particularly in western settlements, those under the influence of Barton W. Stones, joined with the "Disciples" of Campbell's influence in 1832, in Lexington, KY, to form the "Restoration" of the 19th century. Many of those of the Connection in the New England states, however, pursued a more independent path. The influence of both groups was felt in Canada. Ed Broadus' carefully researched paper is valuable for its examination of the impact of this influence on the restoration movement in Ontario. Edwin's paper is available, as well, in print form and in audio (CD or tape).

In addition to the two papers mentioned above, five additional papers were presented to the historical society's annual meeting, with printed copies made available. Myrna Perry completed the Hamilton churches collection with "Hamilton Churches, Excerpts from the *Gospel Herald*, 1946-1999." Myrna also contributed the papers, "Newmarket Church of Christ, Excerpts from the *Gospel Herald*, 1963-1999," "Stouffville, Pine Orchard, and Orangeville, Ontario Congregations," and "Work among the First Nations People." Geoffrey Ellis contributed "Restorationist Churches of the 19th Century Along the 'North Shore' of Lake Ontario, Excerpts from the Periodicals, 1853-1883." This paper draws excerpts from eight different periodical series. It traces the life of 28 congregations, of which 24 had discontinued by the end of the century. (A study of the reasons for the success and failure of the Restorationist churches in this region begs to be made!) All of the above papers are available in print form, and shortly will be available on the CCCHS website.

And finally, Ed Broadus presented his "Addendum" to the paper he presented at the 2007 meeting, "Daniel Wiers in the Maelstrom of the Early Restoration Movement in the Niagara Frontier." His subsequent research has brought closure to the persisting question, "what happened to Wiers?" (see below).

During the earlier business meeting, Dave Ellis and Eugene Perry, whose three-year terms of office had been completed, were

returned by acclamation to serve another term.

Members of the Newmarket congregation were particularly kind in their hosting of the meeting, both in making available the facilities and in the hospitality they extended.

EDWIN BROADUS, "HISTORIAN OF THE YEAR"

Edwin Broadus, of Burlington, ON, past-president of Great Lakes Christian College, was selected by the board of directors of the CCCHS as deserving of the award, "Historian of the Year, 2008." For the past several years Edwin has been immersed in researching Restoration beginnings in the Niagara region, on both sides of the border. His persistence paid off in his solving the mystery regarding both Daniel Wiers' identification and his whereabouts after his effort in establishing in 1832 the congregation from whence the Beamsville and Jordan Churches of Christ emerged. His research in preparation for his 2008 paper, "The Influence of the Christian Connection on the Restoration Movement in Ontario," was meticulous and his conclusions insightful. The information that his paper has provided will both inform and challenge students of our Restorationist past for years to come. Edwin is continuing his research on the early period, now focusing on York and Norval, the identification and roles of such as David Oliphant Sr, James Beaty Sr, Alex Stewart, John Menzies, etc.

BOARD SETS MAJOR GOAL

The CCCHS board of directors met on Dec. 29 (at the Fennell Ave. meeting house) for their first meeting of the 2008-2009 session. The selection of officers for the current term returned Geoff Ellis as president; Ron Knight, vice-president; Donald Perry, secretary; Eugene Perry, treasurer; and David Ellis, historian.

Plans for the 2009 annual meeting were considered and the decision was reached to explore the early efforts in Christian education in Canada. The desired venue was the Beamsville campus of Great Lakes Christian High School (since confirmed). The date will be Saturday, August 15, 2009. The board addressed the society's

continuing objective: making open access available to the broader public of contents of the periodical record of the Restoration Movement in Canada. This past year, CDs were produced of the *Christian Quarterly*, 1916-17; and the *Christian Monthly Review*, 1919-1933. Shortly these will be available in the CCCHS website as .pdf files. The board determined that the project for the current year would be the digitization of the *Bible Student*, 1904-1913. This is a particularly important periodical record, edited for the most part by H. M. Evans, in that it covers the early years of the 1900s, immediately following the trauma of the end-of-the-century fellowship-wide division. Chronicled are the efforts of a small but vigorous band of workers. The cost of the processing of the printed material, unless many hours of volunteer service can be received, will be several thousand dollars. An effort will be made to reach out to our membership and to our interested public for cash donations to support this effort. (Donations to the CCCHS, a registered charity, receive tax credits.) Friends everywhere are invited to join hands in accomplishing this significant venture.

You are invited to become a
"CCCHS PATRON
 for the Preservation of our Past"
 by contributing \$500 to the fund that
 will make generally available the text
 of our periodical record, beginning
 with the
 digitization of the *Bible Student*,
 1904-1913.
 (Contact any board member.)

A GOOD IDEA!

One of our CCCHS members was travelling recently in Hawaii where she encountered a person from Ranger, Texas. When the person of the first part casually reported that she had just come from an annual meeting of the CCCHS in Canada, the person of the second part was prompted to relate her story of her own activity in gathering historical data. The person of the first part relayed this information to the society, believing it worthy of being circulated among

our membership in hopes that several might "go and do likewise."

"I want to tell you about a project I began and continue to do for the church here in Ranger (Texas). I sing/sang at a whole lot of funerals. While at one a number of years ago, I thought how we are losing our members (both current and former) and then they sort of fade away and are forgotten. I got the cooperation of the members here and collected the names of relatives, their birth dates and dates of death, and sometimes the cause of death. Our preacher at the time, Shawn Johnson, had done a thesis for his Master's degree (I think it was his Master's) on the history of the Church here in Ranger. I used that as a starting point then put together various events, special and memorable that I thought should be included. Then I added the list of any member of the Ranger Church whose records I had. If there was a picture or a funeral handout, I included it as well, using the plastic protector sheets. One of our ladies did a needle-point title for the cloth cover on a 4" notebook with OUR FAMILY as the title. After the contents were too much for the book, those deceased lists went into another notebook labeled MANSION DWELLERS. This information got a lot of attention and appreciation. The books are left on the table in the foyer where a good number of people examine them fairly often. Anyway, I am telling you this just in case you would be interested in doing something of a similar nature."

Well, you may not have a Master's thesis to start with, but sources for congregational histories are close at hand and just need to be searched out. A good idea! Good hunting!

A FINAL WORD ON WIERS

In the previous issue of the CCHS Newsletter, Edwin Broadus in his "Update on Daniel Wiers," provided an expanded characterization of Wiers supplied by information found in *The Life of David Marks*, an itinerant Freewill Baptist preacher, and the *Morning Star*, a Freewill Baptist publication. The account concluded, however, with the tantalizing statement, "Yet to be determined is what happened to Wiers after he left

Upper Canada in 1834." In his concluding statement, Edwin opined, "...the discovery of so much material previously unknown suggests that someone somewhere may yet answer this question, too."

It turns out that Edwin Broadus was to become that "someone." His "Addendum," given at the Newmarket meeting, includes this information:

Wiers is listed in the 1856 atlas of Norfolk County, ON, and in the 1861 census for Windham Township of that county, as a "botanic" physician (practicing a form of alternative medicine using herbs). He was married to Helen Tinlin, daughter of Daniel and Helen Tinlin. Their first child, Margaret was born in the USA in about 1844, perhaps during a stint of study in medicine. Their second child, Rhodesia was born in Ontario in 1849. He was a participant in petitioning the Canada legislature regarding restrictions on unlicensed practice of medicine in 1850. The 1861 census lists Daniel and Helen and their two children as "Bible Christians." In 1858, the family took out patents for 200 acres of land in to Oceana County, Michigan. In 1862 he added 151 acres of additional land in that county. Daniel Wiers died in Berlin Township in Ionia County, MI on Sept. 26, 1869. (A fuller account is available in the Broadus paper on Wiers with its "Addendum.")

THE HICKORY COLLEGE CHURCH

As an example of members writing histories of local congregations, the following includes excerpts from "A History of the Hickory College Church" of Lewiston, NY, written by Norman Peirce. A copy of this work was provided by Gary Peirce, presently of Lewiston. While not dated, the report concludes in the mid-1960s. The author reached back to "the beginnings" in his research.

"In 1835 Alexander Campbell, founder of our sect in this country, made a tour of Western New York, and organized congregations in Clarence, North Lancaster, Williamsville, Buffalo, and Lockport. In some of these places a group of 'Campbellites' had organized before their leader's visit. Western New York at that time was sparsely settled and travel was difficult so Alexander Campbell was forced to travel by stage or boat.

A church was organized in Tonawanda in 1853 and the first building there was constructed in 1857. Another one was started in December of 1867, when Tobias Witmir, Williamsville, at the invitation of David Young, preached a sermon to a congregation of nine people in Suspension Bridge. This meeting was held in a schoolhouse on Military Road, three miles from the then Village of Suspension Bridge, New York. Mr. Witmir continued to preach every Lord's Day until December of 1868, when there was a baptism of twenty-one persons. They then united into a body known as the 'Christian Church' of Suspension Bridge, New York. The legal records indicates (sic) the Christian Church of Suspension Bridge was known as the 'Church of Christ' during the period from 1870-1897. Although the names of Moses, Oliphant, and Betty appear in their records as ministers, A Rev. Oliver G. Hertzog, was their first full time pastor. He began his work there in October of 1870 and continued for three years. While serving their church, he conducted meetings in Sanburn and Pekin. These meetings resulted in the organization of the 'Pekin Church of Christ.' Mr. Witmir made it possible for Rev. Hertzog to attend these meetings by driving him to and from Pekin with a horse and carriage. At first meetings were held in the old Congregational Church in the village of Pekin; and then in homes and during summers in the large barn of Abraham LeVan. Organization was slow, comprising several families and neighbors. Rev. Oliver G. Hertzog who was from Bethany College in Pennsylvania (sic), preached until 1874 and then Rev. Andrew Scott from Suspension Bridge on some Lord's Days. In 1888 the organization was large enough to demand a building. Abraham LeVan, who was from Milton, Pennsylvania, was of the 'Campbellite' belief and seemed to have the greatest influence in establishing the church in Pekin. A lot was bought in the village and ... \$1500 [was the] cost of the new building...From 1888 to 1911 there was a good-sized membership..."

The history moves on into the 1900s and tells of how the Pekin church closed in 1939 to be reborn in Niagara Falls, NY, and later to become the LaSalle Church of Christ on Military Rd. From this congregation, several families moved to establish the Church of

Christ in Lewiston in 1959, meeting in the old Hickory School building. This report is important for the names, dates, and places that are included and the transitions of congregations from one location to another. (A complete copy of the 'History of the Hickory College Church' is available in the CCCHS archives.) Every existing congregation has an interesting and important past that deserves to be recorded. Will you follow Norman Peirce's example?

CCCHS MEMBERS RECOGNIZED

- Myrna Perry was among several recently recognized by the Vineland, Ontario library, when she received the "2008 Good Citizen" award in recognition of her volunteer work with the library. This award came with certificates, as well, from the Town of Lincoln, the provincial legislature, and the federal legislature.
- Hope Martin was pictured in the June 23, 2006 issue of *Niagara This Week* (news item just received—this is history!) as a participant with several other members of the Retired Women Teachers of Ontario in the production of the book, *Chalk, Challenge and Change, Stories from Women Teachers in Ontario, 1920-1979*. Hope was an "interviewer" for the production.

CCCHS Publications Order Form

	<u>Price</u>
☐ Churches of Christ in St. Catharines, From the Periodicals, by Myrna Perry, et al	9.00
☐ Daniel Wiers in the Maelstrom of the Early Restoration Movement on the Niagara Frontier, *with Addendum, by Edwin Broadus	4.00
☐ *Hamilton Churches, Excerpts from the <i>Gospel Herald</i> , 1946-1999, by Myrna Perry	7.00
☐ *Newmarket Church of Christ, Excerpts from the <i>Gospel Herald</i> , 1963-1999, by Myrna Perry	4.50
☐ Periodical Publishing in the Restoration Movement in Canada from 1833, by Eugene Perry	2.50
☐ Restoration in Hamilton, Ontario, 1821-2001, by Geoffrey Ellis, et al	7.00
☐ Restoration in the Georgian Bay, 1853-1895, Items from the Periodicals,	

- by Geoffrey Ellis 5.00
- ☐ Restoration in the Niagara District & the Niagara Frontier, Excerpts from the Periodicals, 1853-1900, by Geoffrey Ellis 4.00
- ☐ *Restorationist Churches of the 19th Century Along the "North Shore" of Lake Ontario, Excerpts from the Periodicals, 1853-1883, by Geoffrey Ellis 7.00
- ☐ *Stouffville, Pine Orchard, and Orangeville, Ontario Congregations, by Myrna Perry 4.50
- ☐ The Fenwick Church of Christ, "Past to Present," by Myrna Perry, et al 4.00
- ☐ *The Influence of the Christian Connection on the Restoration Movement in Ontario, by Edwin Broadus 4.00
- ☐ *The Life of Charles W. Petch, by Shelley Jacobs 4.00
- ☐ The Restoration Churches in Toronto, by Geoffrey Ellis 4.00
- ☐ *Work Among the First Nations People, by Myrna Perry 4.50
- ☐ CDs (or Tapes#), (each) 5.00
- ☐ *Pioneer Churches of the Georgian Bay* (PowerPoint), by Ron Knight
 - ☐ *Daniel Wiers in the Maelstrom of the Early Restoration Movement on the Niagara Frontier*, by Edwin Broadus
 - ☐ *The Fenwick Church of Christ ... Past to Present*, by Don Hipwell
 - ☐ *The Oldest Church of Christ in the British Isles*, by Jerry Rushford
 - ☐ *Restoration in the Maritimes*, by George Mansfield, and *The Church in Welland*, by Harold Bruggen
 - ☐ *The Life of Charles W. Petch*, by Shelley Jacobs
 - ☐ *The Influence of the Christian Connection on the Restoration Movement, in Ontario*, by Edwin Broadus
 - ☐ *Christian Quarterly* (1916, 1917), *Christian Monthly Review* (1919-1922)**
 - ☐ *Christian Monthly Review* (1923-1926, 1933)**
 - ☐ *Christian Monthly Review* (1927-1932)** (** each) \$10.00

(*New in 2008. #Indicate if tapes are desired.)

Check the item(s) desired in the boxes (☐) above.
Total the cost: \$ _____ *

Supply: Name _____
(*Postage and Handling to be added)
Address _____
Phone _____
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Province _____
Postal/Zip Code _____
Forward: CCCHS, 120 Moccasin Dr. Waterloo,
ON N2L 4C3, or Phone: 519-885-3702,
or E-mail: ccchs1@gmail.com

2009 MEMBERSHIPS ARE NOW DUE

2009 CCCHS membership fees, covering Sept. 1, 2008 through Aug. 31, 2009 are now being received. Annual fees are \$25.00 (for both voting and associate memberships).

Direct your payment to treasurer, Eugene Perry, 4904 King St., Beamsville, ON L0R 1B6.

Would you like to become a member? Contact any member of the CCCHS board of directors for information.

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